

(19)



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(11)

EP 1 038 640 A2

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:
27.09.2000 Bulletin 2000/39

(51) Int Cl.7: B25J 9/16, G05B 19/19

(21) Application number: 99310609.5

(22) Date of filing: 24.12.1999

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE
Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK RO SI

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(30) Priority: 25.03.1999 JP 8190999

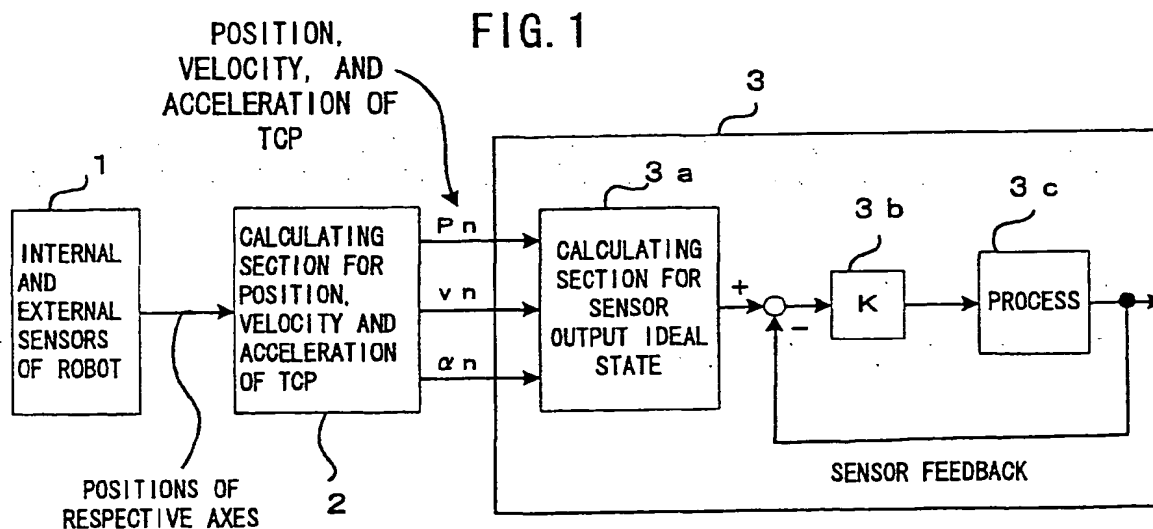
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(54) **Robot controller..**

(57) A robot controller which controls a process controlled variable of an operational tool mounted on a robot in synchronism with the robot motion. The position of each axis of the robot is detected by a sensor such as a position detector. In a calculating section, motion variables such as position P_n , velocity v_n and acceleration α_n of a tool center point (TCP) are detected from the respective positions of the robot axes. An ideal output (target value) of a sensor for detecting a controlled variable to be controlled in accordance with the motion

state is determined in a calculating section. A sensor output is subtracted from the target value to determine a deviation. The deviation is multiplied by a proportional gain K to determine a manipulated variable. By using this manipulated variable, the process of an arc welding machine, sealing machine, or laser beam machine in which a tool is mounted on a distal end of a robot wrist is controlled. The target value is determined in accordance with the change of motion state of the robot, and feedback control is carried out so as to follow the target value so that uniform operation is achieved.



EP 1 038 640 A2

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to control of peripheral equipment of a robot, and more particularly to control of a tool mounted on a distal end of a robot wrist, which has variables to be controlled in synchronism with a motion of the robot.

[0002] Peripheral equipment of a robot is generally controlled so that an on/off signal is outputted from a robot controller and a synchronization is made in a degree such that the operation of the peripheral equipment is started and stopped based on the on/off signal.

[0003] For example, in the case of a sealing robot which applies sealing material to an object in operation of the robot by means of a sealing gun mounted on a distal end of a robot wrist, a flow control of the sealing material is generally carried out so that a sealing-on signal is outputted from a robot controller to start the operation of the sealing gun when a nozzle tip of the sealing gun is positioned at a start point of a portion to be sealed, and a sealing-off signal is outputted from the robot controller to stop the operation of the sealing gun when the nozzle tip of the sealing gun reaches an end point of the sealing portion.

[0004] However, if a flow rate of sealing material discharged from the sealing gun is constant, quantity of the sealing material applied on the object changes depending on velocity of a tool center point (TCP) of the robot, i.e., velocity of the sealing gun. In this view, there has been developed and disclosed a method of making quantity of the applied material constant by changing the flow rate of the sealing material in accordance with the commanded velocity of the robot in Japanese Patent No. 2700971.

[0005] As described, the relationship between the robot and the peripheral equipment thereof is generally such that the peripheral equipment is on/off controlled based on an on/off signal outputted from the robot controller. Therefore, in the case where process control of variables such as flow rate and pressure is required for a tool such as a sealing gun mounted on the distal end of the robot wrist, high operational quality is hardly obtained merely by the on/off control. Also, in the above-described method disclosed in Japanese Patent No. 2700971, only the flow rate of the sealing material is changed in accordance with the commanded velocity of the robot, and the flow rate is not subjected to feedback control. This leads to a problem in that the flow rate sometimes does not agree with the target flow rate due to an operational environment such as an ambient temperature, and therefore various compensations have to be made.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] An object of the present invention is to provide a robot controller capable of controlling process controlled variables of an operational tool mounted on a robot.

[0007] According to one aspect of the invention, the robot controller comprises motion control means for moving an operational tool mounted on a robot with respect to an object; supply means for supplying energy to be applied to the object through the operational tool; supply control means for issuing a supply command to the supply means, the supply command being determined based on motion variable of the operational tool in motion obtained by the motion control means; and means for feeding back a parameter representing power of the energy supplied through the operational tool to alter the supply command based on the fed back parameter.

[0008] The motion variable may be a velocity of a control point of the robot relative to the object. The supply means may be a power source for supplying a welding current, a laser oscillator for supplying a laser beam, or an electric motor for driving a pump for supplying sealing material or paint.

[0009] In the case where the supply means is the welding power source, the fed back parameter may be a welding current, and in the case where the supply means is the laser oscillator, the fed back parameter may be an excitation current of the laser oscillator.

[0010] Further, the supply means may supply energy to an operational substance to be fused so as to apply the fused operational substance to the object through the operational tool. In this case, a parameter representing power of the energy supplied to the operational substance is fed back. The operational substance may be a filler metal, and the fed back parameter may be a welding current.

[0011] According to another aspect of the invention, supply means supplies an operational substance to be applied to an object through an operational tool, a parameter representing the supply rate of the operational substance supplied through the operational tool is fed back, and a supply command is altered based on the fed back parameter. In this case, the supply means may be an electric motor for driving a pump for supplying sealing material or paint, and the fed back parameter may be a pressure of the sealing material or paint at an outlet of the operational tool.

[0012] For a better understanding of the invention, and to show how the same may be carried into effect, reference will now be made, by way of example, to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram for explaining the principle of motion in accordance with the present invention;
FIG. 2 is a block diagram of a process control section in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention

when peripheral equipment is an arc welding machine;

FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a process control section in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention when peripheral equipment is a sealing machine or a painting machine;

FIG. 4 is a block diagram of a process control section in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention when peripheral equipment is a laser beam machine;

FIG. 5 is a block diagram of a robot controller in the embodiment;

FIG. 6 is a flowchart for process control processing for peripheral equipment executed by a main processor of a robot controller in the embodiment;

FIG. 7 is a flowchart for processing in a process control section when the peripheral equipment is an arc welding;

FIG. 8 is a flowchart for processing in a process control section when the peripheral equipment is a sealing machine or a painting machine; and

FIG. 9 is a flowchart for processing in a process control section when the peripheral equipment is a laser beam machine.

[0013] FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram for explaining an operational principle of the present invention. In the present invention, the positions on robot axes are determined by various internal and external sensors of the robot, and a position P_n , a velocity v_n and an acceleration α_n of a TCP (tool center point; robot control point which is set at a center point of an end effector) are determined in a calculating section 2 based on the respective axes positions, and transferred to a process control loop 3 for controlling the process of an operational tool mounted on a distal end of a robot wrist.

[0014] In the process control loop 3, an ideal state of output of a sensor for detecting a controlled variable of a controlled object is determined in a sensor output ideal-state calculating section 3a, which constitutes supply control means, based on the position P_n , velocity v_n and acceleration α_n of the TCP as motion variables of the operational tool. In other words, a target value, which is an ideal value of the controlled variable detected by the sensor, is determined. Then, a deviation between the value in the ideal state (target value) and an actual value of the controlled variable detected by the sensor is obtained, and the deviation is multiplied by a proportional constant K (element 3b) to determine the manipulated variable, which is used as a control input for a process (3c) of the controlled object.

[0015] The above is a description of the principle of synchronous operation of the peripheral equipment with the robot in which the tool (peripheral equipment) mounted on the distal end of the robot requires process control in synchronism with the robot motion.

[0016] FIG. 5 is a block diagram of an essential portion of a robot controller for controlling the above-described peripheral equipment (tool) requiring the process control. A main processor 1, a memory 2 consisting of RAM, ROM, and nonvolatile memory (EEPROM etc.), an interface 3 for teaching operation panel, an interface 6 for external devices, and a servo control section 5 are connected to a bus 7. A teaching operation panel 4 is connected to the interface 3 for teaching operation panel.

[0017] A system program for supporting the basic functions of the robot and the robot controller is stored in the ROM of the memory 2. Also, a robot operation program taught for an specific application and associated set data is stored in the nonvolatile memory of the memory 2. The RAM of the memory 2 is used for temporary storage of data in various kinds of calculation processing performed by the processor 1.

[0018] The servo control section 5 has servo controllers 5_{a1} to 5_{an} (n : total number of robot axes, including the number of operational axes set to the tool mounted on the distal end of the robot wrist). Each of the servo controllers 5_{a1} to 5_{an} is composed of a processor, ROM, RAM, etc. to carry out position and speed loop control of a servomotor for driving each axis and further to carry out current loop control. The servo controller consists of a so-called digital servo controller which carries out loop control of position, speed and current by means of software. The output of the servo controller 5_{a1} to 5_{an} controls the servomotor M1 to Mn for each axis through a servo amplifier 5_{b1} to 5_{bn} . Although not shown in the figure, each of the servomotors M1 to Mn is provided with a position/speed detector so that the position and speed of each servomotor detected by the position/speed detector is fed back to each of the servo controllers 5_{a1} to 5_{an} . Also, the input/output interface 6 is connected with sensors provided on the robot and actuators and sensors of the peripheral equipment.

[0019] According to the present invention, process control for the processing shown in FIG. 1 is carried out by the robot controller having the above-described hardware constitution, with respect to the tool (peripheral equipment) mounted on the distal end of the robot wrist and requiring the process control in the peripheral equipments connected to the input/output interface 6.

[0020] FIG. 6 is a flowchart of processing, as shown in the schematic diagram of FIG. 1 showing the principle of operational, to be executed by the main processor 1 of the robot controller for each predetermined period to determine the manipulated variable to be outputted to the peripheral equipment requiring the process control.

[0021] First, an absolute position is read from a position detector for detecting the position on each axis of the robot, which is an internal sensor of the robot (Step S1). Based on the read axes position, generally called forward conversion

processing is performed using a physical property such as a length of each arm of the robot to determine the position P_n of TCP on a reference rectangular coordinate system (Step S2).

[0022] Next, the TCP position P_{n-1} in the last period which has been determined in the last period and stored in the memory is subtracted from the TCP position P_n determined in Step S2, and the difference is divided by a time interval T of the processing period to determine a velocity v_n of motion of TCP. Further, the acceleration α_n is determined from the TCP position P_{n-1} in the last period, the TCP position P_{n-2} in the period before last, and the TCP position P_n in the present period (Step S3).

$$v_n = (P_n - P_{n-1}) / T$$

$$\alpha_n = (v_n - v_{n-1}) / T$$

$$= [\{(P_n - P_{n-1}) / T\} - \{(P_{n-1} - P_{n-2}) / T\}] / T$$

$$= (P_n - 2 \cdot P_{n-1} + P_{n-2}) / T^2$$

[0023] The data in a storage region of the memory storing the TCP position P_{n-1} in the last period is copied into a storage region of the memory storing the TCP position P_{n-2} in the period before last (Step S4).

[0024] The TCP position P_n determined in Step S2 is copied into a memory region storing the TCP position P_{n-1} in the last period (Step S5).

[0025] Next, the target value of a physical quantity (controlled variable) detected by the sensor is calculated from the TCP position P_n , velocity v_n , and acceleration α_n determined in Steps S2 and S3 (Step S6). Further, the detected value sent from the sensor is read as the detected data via the input/output interface 6 (Step S7). The data fed back from the sensor is subtracted from the ideal value sent from the sensor, which is the target value determined in Step S6, and the difference is multiplied by a proportional gain K to determine the manipulated variable, which is supplied to the tool mounted on the distal end of the robot wrist via the input/output interface 6. The peripheral equipment is controlled so that the magnitude of the controlled variable driven by the manipulated variable and detected by the sensor agrees with the target value, which is the ideal value sent from the sensor. The processing in Step S6 constitutes the supply control means of the present invention. The following is a description of examples in which the present invention is applied to an arc welding machine, a sealing material or paint coating machine, and a laser beam machine as the peripheral equipment requiring process control.

<In a case where the peripheral equipment is an arc welding machine>

[0026] Arc welding is performed by fusing a metal to be welded with persistent luminescent electric discharge (arc) being used as a heat source, or by fusing a filler metal (welding rod) and applying it to an object. A welding torch of an arc welding machine is mounted on the distal end of the robot wrist, and a welding current flowing in the welding torch is controlled, by which energy applied for welding is controlled to control welding.

[0027] In the present invention, the welding current is further controlled as the controlled variable by the robot according to the movement velocity of the welding torch so that the power of applied energy per unit welding distance is made uniform, whereby a weld bead is made uniform.

[0028] FIG. 2 is a block diagram of a process control section when the peripheral equipment is an arc welding machine. A tool center point velocity is supplied to a process control loop 3A, which is a welding current control loop for arc welding, from the calculating section 2 for calculating position, velocity, and acceleration in FIG. 1. The process control loop 3A has a sensor output ideal state calculating section 3Aa for determining the target value of welding current (ideal output value of a sensor for measuring welding current), which is the controlled variable, from the tool center point velocity. A welding current value I_f which is detected by the sensor and fed back is subtracted from the target value I_{cmd} of welding current supplied from the sensor output ideal state calculating section 3Aa to determine the deviation, and the deviation is multiplied by the proportional constant K (element 3Ab) to determine a voltage command V_{cmd} as the controlled variable. The welding current (3Ac) is controlled by this voltage command V_{cmd} .

[0029] The sensor output ideal state calculating section 3Aa changes the target value I_{cmd} of welding current, which is the controlled variable, according to the tool center point velocity. Specifically, in order to obtain a uniform weld bead, the energy applied for welding by the welding machine has only to be uniform per unit movement distance. Therefore, if the tool center point velocity is high, the welding distance per unit time increases, so that the applied energy must

be increased. This means that the power of energy applied for welding must be changed in proportion to tool center point velocity v_n . Taking the power of applied energy as E , the welding current as I , and the resistance from the welding torch tip (tool tip) to a weld point of the object to be welded as R , $E = RI^2$. In order for the weld bead to be always kept constant even if the velocity v of the welding torch tip (tool center point) changes, the relationship expressed by the following equation (1) has only to hold.

$$E = RI^2 = K1 \cdot v_n \quad (1)$$

where, $K1$ is a proportional constant. From Eq. (1), the target value I_{cmd} of the welding current I , which is the controlled variable, is expressed as

$$I_{cmd} = (K1 \cdot v_n / R)^{1/2} \quad (2)$$

Also, since the resistance R from the welding torch tip to a weld point of the object to be welded is proportional to the distance between them, the resistance R is expressed as

$$R = K2 \cdot (\text{distance between welding torch tip and object}) \quad (3)$$

Thereupon, the target value I_{cmd} of the welding current can be determined from the above equations (2) and (3).

FIG. 7 is an essential portion of a flowchart for processing in each predetermined period of the main processor 1 which controls the welding current of the arc welding machine, which is the peripheral equipment.

In the processing for controlling the welding current of the arc welding machine, the processing in Step S6 is executed after the processing from Step S1 to Step S5 in FIG. 6 has been performed. In the control of the arc welding machine, the processing in Step S6 is replaced by the processing in Steps S6a1, S6a2 and S6a3 in FIG. 7, the processing in Step 7 is replaced by the processing in Step S7a, and the processing in Step S8 is replaced by the processing in Step S8a.

After the processing in Steps S1 to S5 is executed to determine the TCP position P_n , velocity v_n , and acceleration a_n in the present period, a robot motion command is first read by means of the taught operational program, and a commanded position P_p of TCP is determined by forward conversion (Step S6a1). If the taught operational program has been produced at the TCP position P_p on the reference orthogonal coordinate system, the processing of forward conversion need not be performed, and the read data is data of the TCP position P_p .

Next, a size G_n of a gap between the TCP and a weld point position is determined from the commanded value P_p of TCP position and the present position P_n . Specifically, the size G_n of a gap between the weld torch tip position and the weld point position is determined. In this embodiment, a weld line of the object lies on the X-Y plane on the reference orthogonal coordinate system, and the welding torch is disposed in the plus direction of Z axis above the plane on which the weld line of the object lies, so that a position which is apart from the welding torch tip (TCP) by a predetermined gap size G_0 in the plus direction of Z axis is taught as the weld line. Therefore, the size G_n of the gap in the present period is determined as follows: The position P_p commanded by the taught operational program is subtracted from the present position P_n of TCP to determine a position deviation between the present position P_n and the position P_p commanded by the taught operational program, and the size G_0 of the gap at the time of teaching is added to this position deviation (Step S6a2).

$$G_n = P_n - P_p + G_0 \quad (4)$$

By using the gap G_n thus obtained, the processing of Eq. (3) is performed to determine the resistance R , and further the processing of Eq. (2) is performed to determine the commanded current I_{cmd} as the target welding current (Step S6a3). The measured value I_f of welding current fed back from the welding machine is read via the input/output interface 6 (Step S7a), and a value obtained by subtracting the fed back current I_f from the commanded current I_{cmd} is multiplied by the proportional gain K to obtain the voltage command $V_{cmd} (= K \cdot (I_{cmd} - I_f))$ and give it to the welding machine (Step S8a). Thereby, the processing in the present process period is completed. Subsequently, for each period, the processing in Steps S1 to S5 in FIG. 6 and Steps S6a1, S6a2, S6a3, S7a and S8a in FIG. 7 is executed to change the welding current of the welding machine according to the movement velocity of the welding torch (tool),

whereby control is carried out so that uniform energy is always applied to each unit weld movement distance to make the weld bead uniform.

<In a case where the peripheral equipment is a sealing machine or a painting machine>

[0037] In the case of a sealing machine which applies a sealing material to an operational object or a painting machine which applies paint to an operational object, the pressure of sealing material at the outlet of a sealing gun for discharging the sealing material or the pressure of paint at the outlet of a painting gun for spraying paint is proportional to the flow rate of discharge or spray, so that the flow rate of the sealing material or paint is controlled by measuring the pressure by using a sensor. Therefore, in the sensor output ideal state calculating section 3a, a pressure detected by this sensor is an ideal output of pressure corresponding to the flow rate, so that this pressure is output as the target value.

[0038] FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a process control section 3 for a sealing machine or a painting machine. The sealing gun of the sealing machine or the painting gun of the painting machine is mounted on the distal end of the robot wrist. When a distal end velocity (tool center point velocity) v_n of the sealing gun or the painting gun is supplied to the sensor output ideal state calculating section 3Ba, the sensor output ideal state calculating section 3Ba determines a target commanded pressure P_{cmd} by multiplying the tool distal end velocity v_n by a conversion factor β and outputs it. A pressure P_r of the sealing material or paint at the outlet of the nozzle, which is detected by the sensor and fed back, is subtracted from the commanded pressure P_{cmd} to determine the pressure deviation, and the pressure deviation is multiplied by the proportional gain K (element 3Bb) to determine a torque command (current command) as the manipulated variable. Thereby, a motor 3Bc for controlling the flow rate of a pump for discharging the sealing material or paint is driven by this torque command.

[0039] The above is a description of the process control of the sealing machine or painting machine. In the present invention, this control is carried out by the main processor 1 of the robot controller. The main processor 1 executes the processing shown in FIG. 6 for each predetermined period, but the precessing in Steps S6, S7 and S8 in FIG. 6 is replaced by the processing in Steps S6b, S7b and S8b in FIG. 8, respectively. After performing the processing in Steps S1 to S5 described before, the main processor 1 determines the tool center point velocity (velocity of nozzle tip of the sealing gun or painting gun) v_n , and multiplies the determined velocity v_n by the conversion factor β to determine the target commanded pressure P_{cmd} (Step S6b). Then, the main processor 1 reads the pressure P_r of the sealing material or paint at the outlet of the nozzle, which is detected by the sensor and fed back, and multiplies a value obtained by subtracting the detected and fed back pressure P_r from the target commanded pressure P_{cmd} by the proportional gain K to determine the current command (torque command) for the flow rate controlling motor. Thereafter, the current command is given to the flow rate controlling motor of the sealing machine or painting machine via the external input/output interface 6, thereby completing the processing in the present period (Steps S7b and S8b).

[0040] Subsequently, the processing in Steps S1 to S5 and Steps S6b, S7b and S8b is executed repeatedly for each predetermined period. The target commanded pressure is determined according to the tool center point velocity (velocity of nozzle tip of the sealing gun or painting gun), and feedback control is carried out so that the pressure detected by the sensor agrees with the target commanded pressure. Therefore, the flow rate of the sealing material or paint discharged from the nozzle of the sealing machine or painting machine changes in proportion to the tool center point velocity, so that the quantity of the sealing material or paint discharged per unit movement distance becomes constant, and a uniform bead width of sealing material or paint width and a uniform thickness can be obtained.

<In a case where the peripheral equipment is a laser beam machine>

[0041] In this case, a laser beam machining head is mounted on the distal end of the robot wrist. By changing the laser intensity of a laser oscillator according to the nozzle tip velocity of the laser beam machining head, the power of energy applied per unit movement distance of the laser beam machining head is made constant, so that laser beam machining of uniform quality can be achieved even if the movement velocity changes.

[0042] In the case of laser machining, applied energy E is proportional to the square of an excitation current I flowing in the laser oscillator. By changing the applied energy in proportion to the movement velocity v_n of the laser beam machining head, the energy applied per unit movement distance can be made constant. Specifically, the following equation holds.

$$E = k_1 \cdot I^2 = k_2 \cdot v_n \quad (5)$$

$$I = (K_1 \cdot v_n)^{1/2} \quad (6)$$

where, k_1 , k_2 and K_1 are constants.

[0043] If the driving current I of the laser oscillator is changed according to the velocity v_n of the laser beam machining head so that the above equation (6) holds, the energy applied per unit movement distance is made uniform even if the velocity changes, so that laser machining of uniform quality can be achieved.

5 [0044] FIG. 4 is a block diagram of the process control section 3 for a laser beam machine. In the sensor output ideal state calculating section 3Ca of the laser beam machine, a target current command I_{cmd} is determined by performing the calculation in Eq. (6) using the tool center point velocity (movement velocity of nozzle tip of the laser beam machining head). A fed back value I_f of driving current of the laser oscillator, which is detected by a sensor, is subtracted from the target current command I_{cmd} to determine the current deviation. This current deviation is multiplied by the

10 proportional gain K (element 3Cb) to determine a voltage command (manipulated variable) V_{cmd} of the laser oscillator, and the laser oscillator 3 Cc is driven by this voltage command V_{cmd} .

[0045] FIG. 9 is a flowchart for processing executed in place of Steps S6, S7 and S8 in FIG. 6 in the case where the peripheral equipment to be process controlled is a laser beam machine.

15 [0046] The main processor 1 of the robot controller performs the processing in Steps S1 to S5 shown in FIG. 6 to determine the velocity v_n of nozzle tip of the laser beam machine, and performs the calculation of Eq. (6) using this velocity to determine the target current command I_{cmd} (Step S6c). Then, a value obtained by subtracting the fed back value I_f of a measured value of driving current of the laser oscillator, which is measured by a sensor, from the target current command I_{cmd} is multiplied by the proportional gain K to determine the voltage command $V_{cmd} (= K \cdot (I_{cmd} - I_f))$ to the laser oscillator as the manipulated variable, and the voltage command V_{cmd} is given to the laser oscillator via the external input/output interface 6 (Steps S7c and S8c).

20 [0047] Subsequently, the processing in Steps S1 to S5 and Steps S6c, S7c and S8c is executed for each predetermined period. The target commanded current I_{cmd} is changed according to the movement velocity of the laser beam machining head, and feedback control is carried out so that the driving current value of the laser oscillator, which is detected by the sensor, agrees with the target commanded current I_{cmd} . Therefore, even if the movement velocity of the laser beam machining head changes, energy per unit movement distance applied by the laser beam machine is made constant, so that laser beam machining such as cutting of uniform quality can be achieved.

25 [0048] In the peripheral equipment which applies a substance or energy to an object through the operational tool mounted on the distal end of the robot wrist, even if the state of robot changes, the robot controller carries out the process control for applying the substance or energy according to the change, so that the substance or energy can always be applied uniformly. Thereby, machining of high quality can be achieved.

Claims

35 1. A robot controller comprising:

40 motion control means for moving an operational tool mounted on a robot with respect to an object;
supply means for supplying energy to be applied to the object through said operational tool;
supply control means for issuing a supply command to said supply means, said supply command being determined based on motion variable of said operational tool in motion obtained by said motion control means;
and
means for feeding back a parameter representing power of said energy supplied through said operational tool to alter said supply command based on the fed back parameter.

45 2. A robot controller for arc welding operation according to claim 1, wherein said motion variable is speed of a control point of the robot relative to the object, said supply means is power source for supplying welding current and said parameter is the welding current.

50 3. A robot controller for laser welding operation according to claim 1, wherein said operational variable is speed of a control point of the robot with respect to the object, said supplying means is a laser oscillator for supplying laser beam and said parameter is excitation current of said laser oscillator.

4. A robot controller for controlling a robot comprising:

55 motion control means for moving an operational tool with respect to an object;
supply means for supplying energy to an operational substance to be fused so as to apply the fused operational substance to the object through said operational tool;
supply control means for issuing a supply command to said supply means, said supply command being de-

terminated based on motion variable of said operational tool in motion obtained by said motion control means;
and
means for feeding back a parameter representing power of said energy supplied from said operational tool to
alter said supply command based on the fed back parameter.

5 5. A robot controller for arc welding according to claim 4, wherein said operational variable is speed of a control point of the robot relative to the object, said supply means is a power source for supplying welding current to filler metal, and said parameter is the welding current.

10 6. A robot controller for controlling a robot comprising:

motion control means for moving an operational tool with respect to an object;
supply means for supplying operational substance to be applied to the object through said operational tool;
supplying control means for issuing a supply command to said supply means, said supply command being
15 determined based on motion variable of said operational tool in motion obtained by said motion control means;
and
means for feeding back a parameter representing supply rate of said operational substance from said operational tool to alter said supply command based on the fed back parameter.

20 7. A robot controller for sealing operation according to claim 6, wherein said operational variable is speed of a control point of the robot with respect to the object, said supply means is an electric motor for driving a pump for supplying sealing material, and said parameter is pressure of the sealing material at an outlet of said operational tool.

25 8. A robot controller for painting operation according to claim 6, wherein said operational variable is speed of a control point of the robot with respect to the object, said supply means is an electric motor for driving a pump for supplying paint, and said parameter is pressure of said paint at an outlet of said operational tool.

FIG. 1

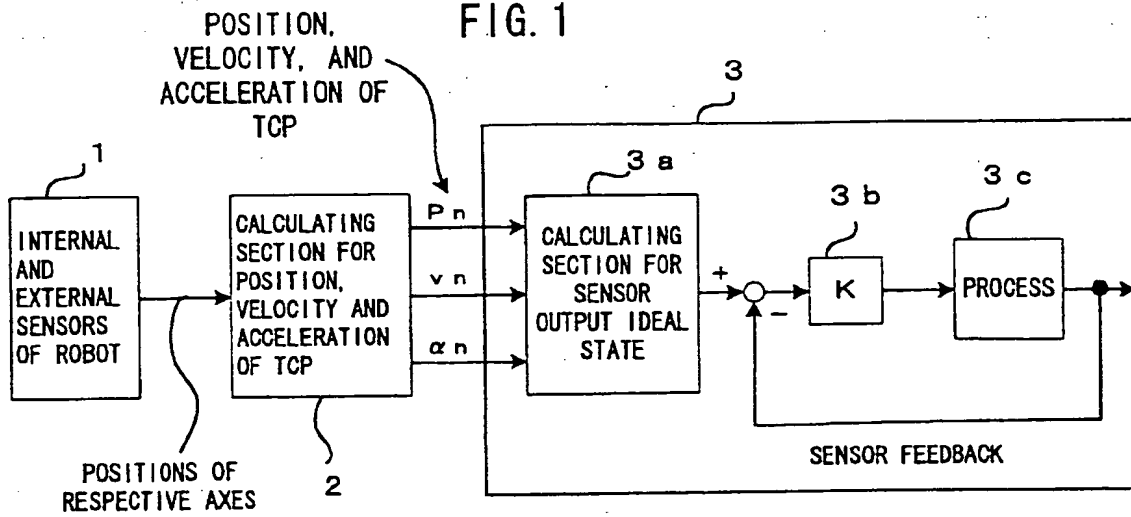


FIG. 2

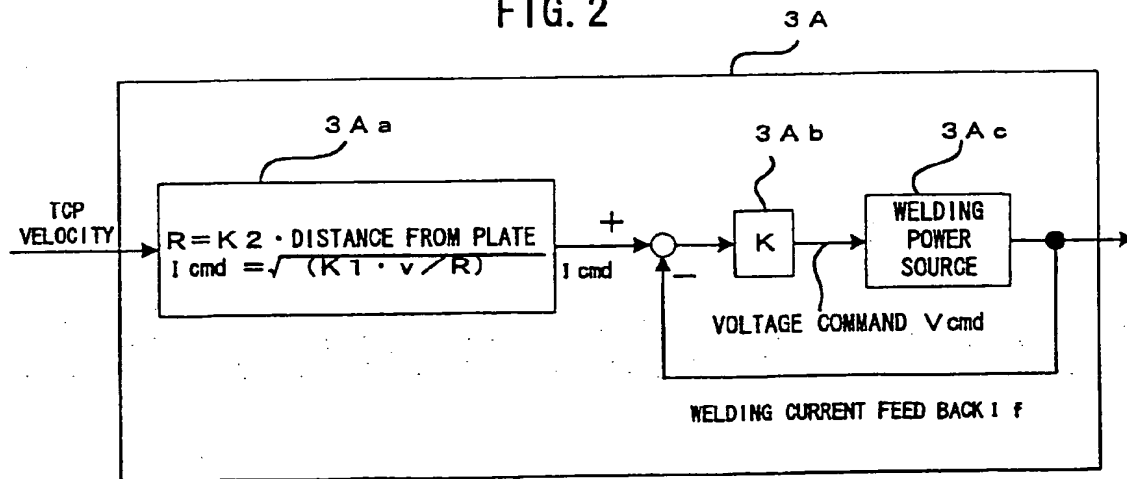


FIG. 3

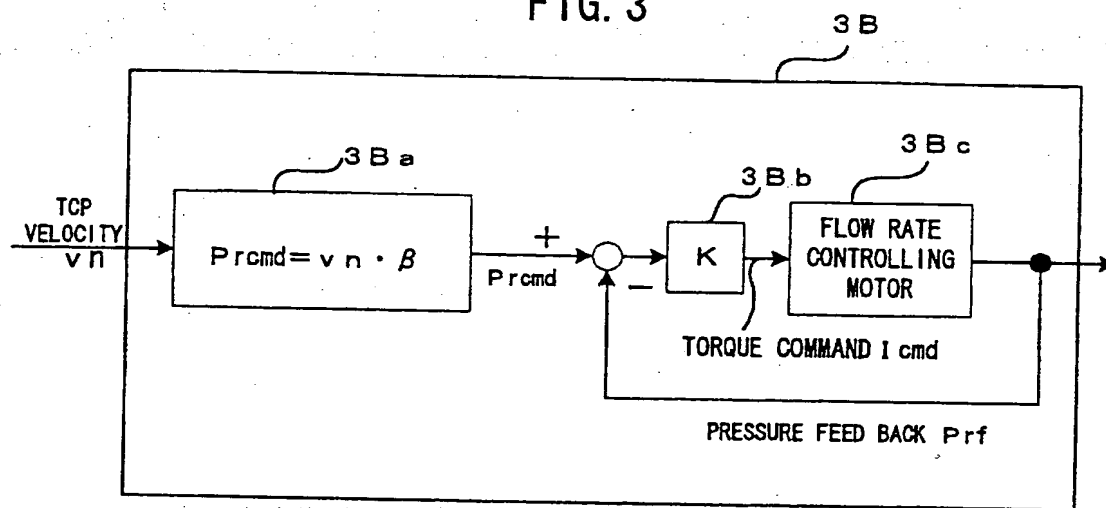


FIG. 4

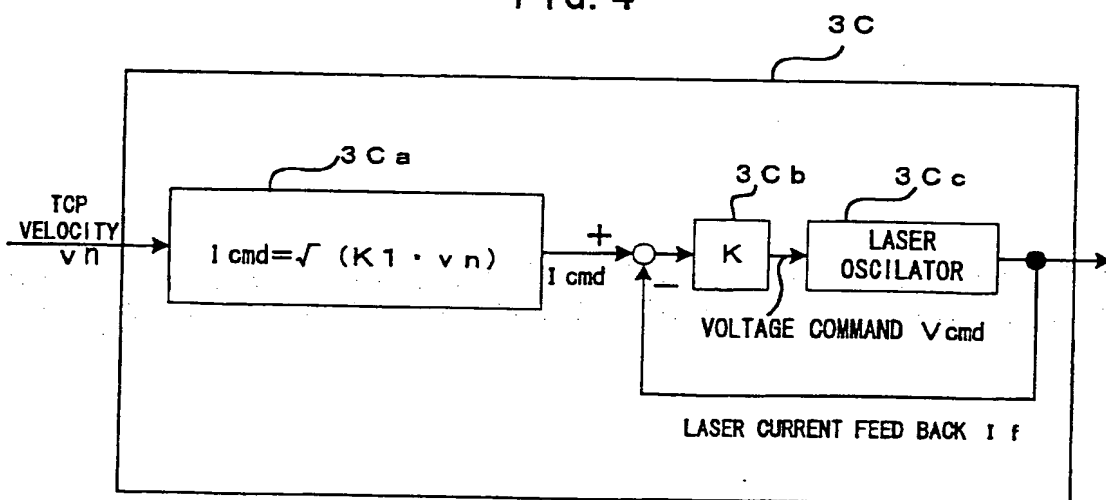


FIG. 5

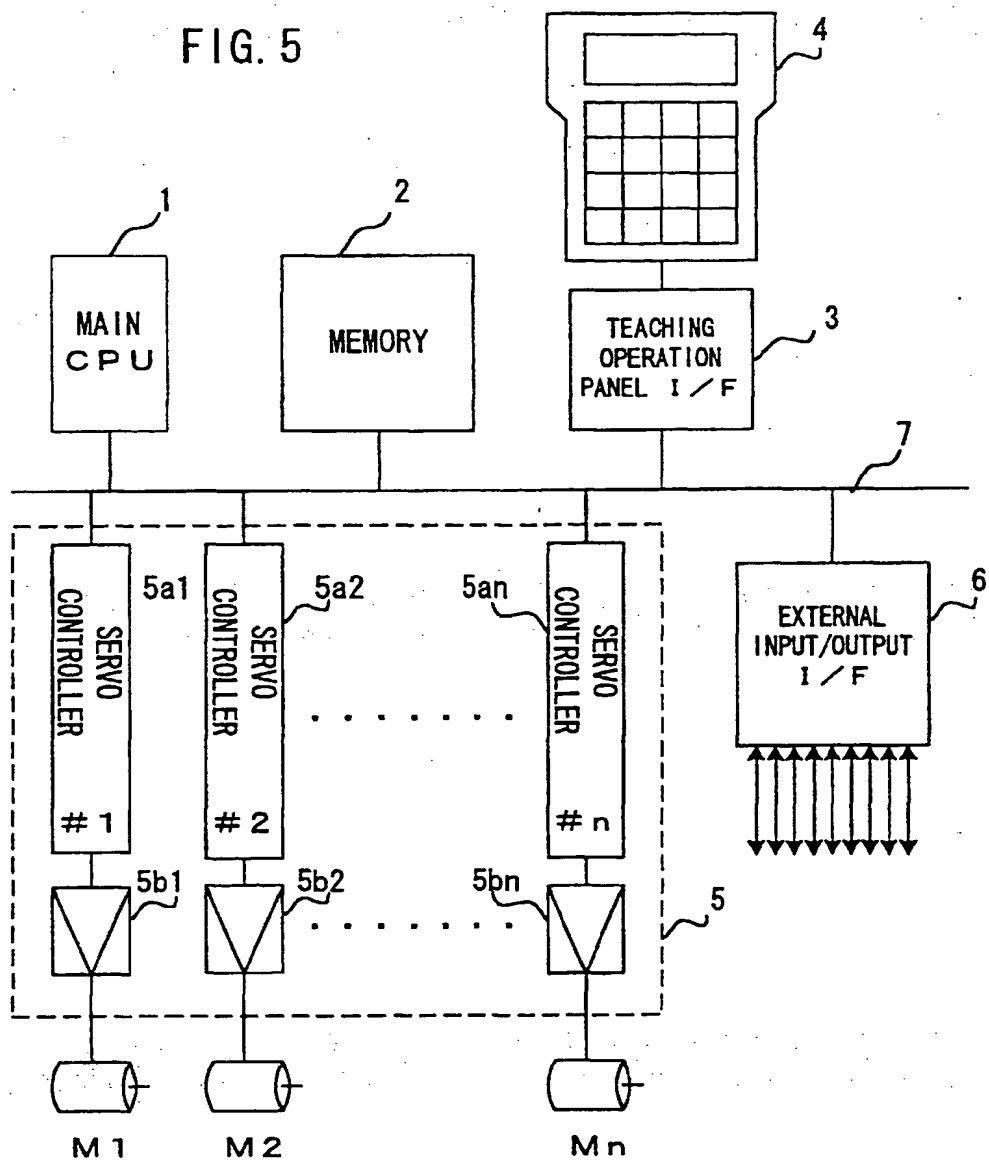


FIG. 6

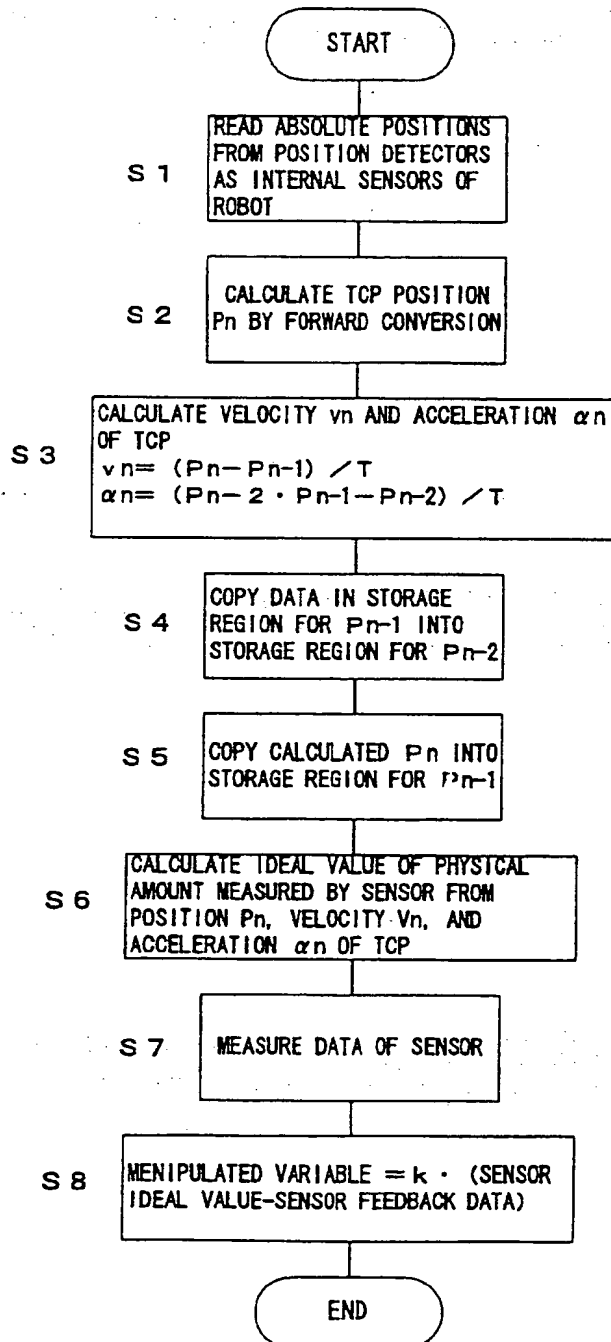


FIG. 7

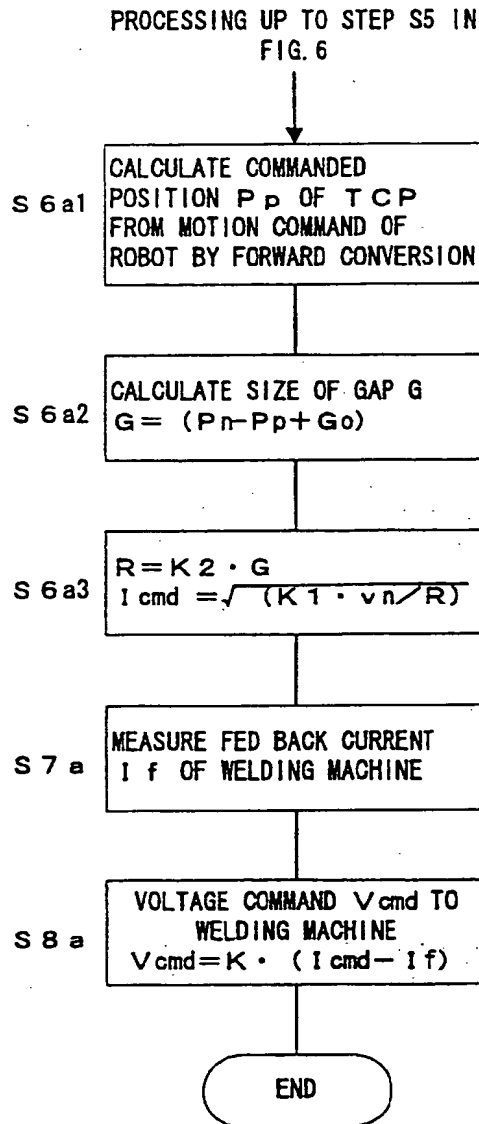


FIG. 8

PROCESSING UP TO STEP S5 IN FIG. 6

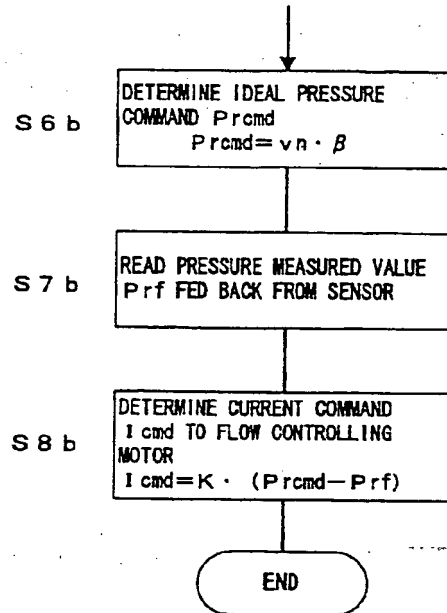
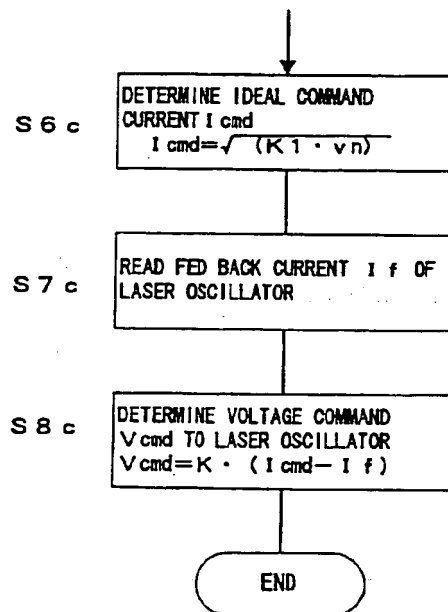


FIG. 9

PROCESSING UP TO STEP S5 IN FIG. 6



(19)



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(11)

EP 1 038 640 A3

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(88) Date of publication A3:
29.01.2003 Bulletin 2003/05

(51) Int Cl.7: **B25J 9/16**, G05B 19/19,
G05B 19/425

(43) Date of publication A2:
27.09.2000 Bulletin 2000/39

(21) Application number: 99310609.5

(22) Date of filing: 24.12.1999

(84) Designated Contracting States:
**AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE**
Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK RO SI

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(30) Priority: 25.03.1999 JP 8190999

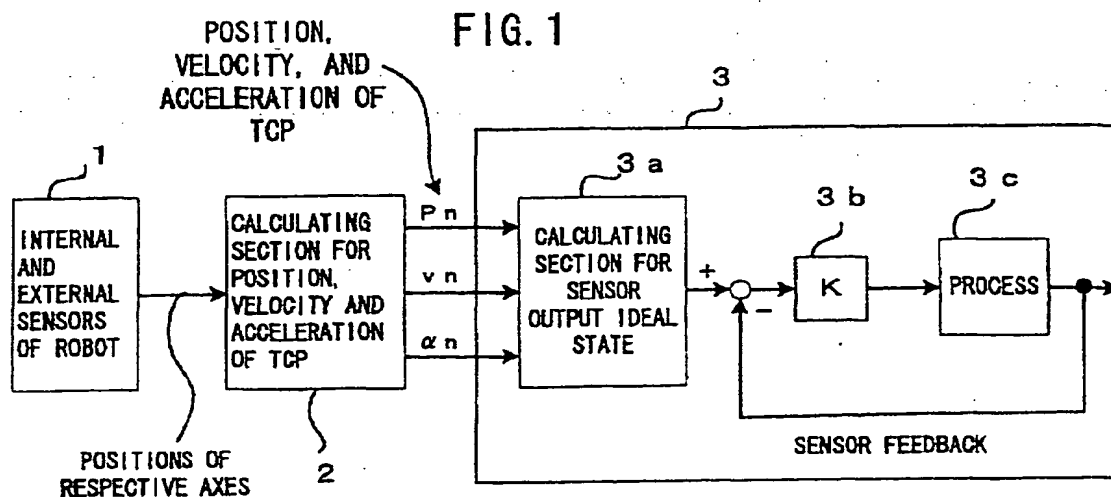
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(54) Robot controller

(57) A robot controller which controls a process controlled variable of an operational tool mounted on a robot in synchronism with the robot motion. The position of each axis of the robot is detected by a sensor such as a position detector. In a calculating section, motion variables such as position P_n , velocity v_n and acceleration α_n of a tool center point (TCP) are detected from the respective positions of the robot axes. An ideal output (target value) of a sensor for detecting a controlled variable to be controlled in accordance with the motion

state is determined in a calculating section. A sensor output is subtracted from the target value to determine a deviation. The deviation is multiplied by a proportional gain K to determine a manipulated variable. By using this manipulated variable, the process of an arc welding machine, sealing machine, or laser beam machine in which a tool is mounted on a distal end of a robot wrist is controlled. The target value is determined in accordance with the change of motion state of the robot, and feedback control is carried out so as to follow the target value so that uniform operation is achieved.


EP 1 038 640 A3



European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 99 31 0609

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Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 6 December 2002	Examiner Hauser, L
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EPO FORM 1503 03.92 (P04C01)

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